

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

FROM: Office of Legislative Counsel 7D35		EXTENSION 6136	NO. DATE 9 June 1975
TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)	DATE RECEIVED FORWARDED		OFFICER'S INITIALS
1. Office of Security	9 JUN 1975		
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Senator Bayh recently introduced a bill to prohibit the use of the polygraph examination by Federal agencies in an employment context. In his introductory remarks he indicated his willingness to be persuaded by intelligence agencies on their use of the polygraph. The attached letter is an invitation from the Director to the Senator for a meeting on this subject. Will you please verify the accuracy of the statements I have made on the Agency's use of the polygraph? The information was drawn primarily from Mr. Brownman's June 1974 testimony before the House Committee on Government Operations, but with some statistical updating from [REDACTED]. Please review and return by noon, 10 June. Thank you.

[REDACTED]

Assistant Legislative Counsel

cc: DDA

in the penultimate paragraph re training facilities, I would add a phrase regarding their selection and training background.

[REDACTED]

6/9/75

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Honorable Birch Bayh
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Senator Bayh:

I read with great interest your remarks in the June 2 Congressional Record accompanying the introduction of S. 1841, which would completely bar the use of the polygraph examination in an employment context by this and other Federal agencies. Your remarks indicated a willingness to listen to reasonable argument regarding the need for a very limited use of the polygraph in the intelligence field.

I believe the polygraph examination is essential to the security program of the Central Intelligence Agency. The predominant use of the polygraph by CIA is as part of the hiring process. After a decision to hire an applicant for a staff position has been made (based on the needs of the Agency and the applicant's qualifications), our Office of Security conducts an investigation to determine the loyalty of the applicant to the United States. The latter stages of the investigation include the administration of a polygraph examination. Statistics dramatically show the importance of the polygraph in screening out potential security risks. During the period January 1963 to August 1974, 60 percent of all applicants disqualified on security grounds were rejected on information solely or principally developed during polygraph interviews.

We at CIA are cognizant of the danger of abuse inherent in the use of any instrument used to distinguish truths from untruths. Consequently, we have adopted strict procedures to forestall abuses and protect those taking the examination. These include:

--the requirement of advance written consent of the applicant;

Office of Medical Services employees to uncover reasons why
a polygraph is not advisable for a particular applicant;

--notification of the privilege against self-incrimination
if a question may pertain to the violation of a criminal law;

--advance preparation of questions to insure that all
questions are directly related to security considerations (e.g.,
no questions on religious thought or practices or political
affiliations of a nonsubversive nature are permitted);

--random monitoring by an experienced supervisor
to insure no improper questions are asked; and

--maintenance of polygraph records in separate files,
with very strict need-to-know rules governing access.

Spot interviews of over 4,000 applicants indicate that these procedures,
careful selection of polygraph applicants
plus our rigorous training program for examiners, have been extremely
successful in preventing abuses.

I would very much like the opportunity to talk with you personally
regarding CIA's polygraph program. I understand my Legislative Counsel,
Mr. George Cary, has already suggested this. I would be pleased to host a
breakfast meeting at the Agency's Langley headquarters, and I am asking
Mr. Cary to contact your office to determine if this might be arranged.

Sincerely,

W. E. Colby
Director